

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 /032 W

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R 061542Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 933

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

UNCLAS OSLO 0052

FOR LABOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, NO

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

REFS: (A) STATE 301390 (B) OSLO A-3, JAN 3, 1975

(C) OSLO 3954 (D) OSLO A-221, DEC 11, 1975

1. NORWAY HAS LONG HAD PROGRAMS TO STIMULATE EMPLOY-
MENT ON A SEASONAL AND REGIONAL BASIS (REF. B, PAGE 27)
AND RESPONDS TO CYCLICAL PROBLEMS WITH SPECIAL ADDITIONAL
MEASURES TO PREVENT UNEMPLOYMENT, AS IT DID THIS YEAR
(REF C, PAGE 3 AND REF D). SOME OF THESE MEASURES ARE GENERAL,
OR DIRECTED PRINCIPALLY AT INDUSTRY, BUT MANY ARE
AIMED AT CONSTRUCTION. HIGHWAY AND OTHER PUBLIC CON-
STRUCTION ARE STIMULATED ON A SEASONAL AND REGIONAL

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BASIS. THIS IS DONE DIRECTLY AND THROUGH SUBSIDIES TO

MUNICIPAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS FOR OFF-SEASON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. PRIVATE PURCHASE OF NEW HOMES CONSTRUCTED DURING THE OFF SEASON IS SUBSIDIZED IN CERTAIN OUTLIER REGIONS (AN IDEA WHICH CAME FROM CANADA).

2. EMBASSY'S NEARLY-COMPLETED ANNUAL LABOR REPORT INCLUDES CHAPTER ON EMPLOYMENT PROBLEM AND SOLUTIONS. EMBASSY WILL AIR MAIL THIS CHAPTER SEPARATELY TO SECRETARY OF LABOR AT ADDRESS PROVIDED IN REF A.

3. AFTER CONSULTING LABOR DIRECTOR AT MUNICIPAL AND LABOR MINISTRY AND BUILDING WORKERS UNION, EMBASSY ASSEMBLED VARIOUS REPORTS INCLUDING MATERIAL RELEVANT TO QUESTIONS IN REF A. EMBASSY HAS EXTRACTED AND, IN SOME CASES, TRANSLATED OR EXPLAINED, SOME RELEVANT MATERIAL AND TABLES. EXTRACTS, REPORTS AND OTHER MATERIALS WERE SENT BY INTERNATIONAL AIR MAIL TO SECRETARY OF LABOR JAN 5. ONE OF REPORTS SENT IS MONTHLY LABOR MARKET REPORT OF DEC 15 PREVIOUSLY POUCHED TO JOHN CHANDLER OF BLS; IT INCLUDES A REPORT ON WINTER EMPLOYMENT MEASURES AND THEIR EFFECT.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT POSSIBLE OECD MAY HAVE PREPARED RELEVANT STUDIES OR STATISTICS ON SUBJECT.

5. BUILDING WORKERS' UNION PRESIDENT RASMUS SOLAND AND EDUCATION SECRETARY BJORN SORENSEN SAID NO STATISTICAL OR OTHER STUDIES ON PRODUCTIVITY IN BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION IN RECENT YEARS EXIST TO HIS KNOWLEDGE. SOLAND SAID BUILDING PRODUCTIVITY HAS BEEN INCREASING AT ABOUT HALF THE PACE OF PRODUCTIVITY IN "IRON AND METAL" (I.E., METAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY). HE SAID THERE IS NO GENERAL UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM FOR BUILDING WORKERS (EXCEPT FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS IN WALLBORD INDUSTRY), AND HAS BEEN NONE DURING LAST SEVERAL YEARS. HE EXPECTS NO UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM IN FUTURE, ALTHOUGH SCATTERED UNEMPLOYMENT ARISES HERE AND THERE. HE GAVE GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT SEASONAL, REGIONAL AND CYCLICAL UNEMPLOYMENT (BUDGETING AND SCHEDULING OF PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION; AND UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTIVITIES OF HOUSING, MUNICIPAL AND OTHER STATE BANKS) CREDIT FOR FACT THERE HAS BEEN NO SERIOUS UNEMPLOYMENT FOR BUILDING WORKERS. SORENSEN ESTIMATED THAT ABOUT 4-500 MAN HOURS ARE NEEDED TO BUILD A THREE BEDROOM HOME WITH KITCHEN AND ONE BATH IN AN OSLO SUBURB IN 1975, COMPARED TO 1200 MAN HOURS IN 1955-57. BYRNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, UNEMPLOYMENT, CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, COST OF LIVING
WAGE ADJUSTMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OSLO00052
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760004-1189
From: OSLO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760183/aaaacvwj.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 301390, 76 OSLO A-3
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: castelsl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUN 2004 by barnescd>; APPROVED <13 AUG 2004 by castelsl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
TAGS: ELAB, EGEN, NO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006